



## From mountain to sea

### Aberdeenshire Parent Factsheet

#### Parent Councils

As a parent you may hear a variety of terms all involving the word parent:

- Parent Council
- Parent Forum
- Parent Body
- Parent Teacher Association

This leaflet aims to explain what each of these is and what each does.

#### What is a Parent Council?

A Parent Council is a group of parents selected by members of the Parent Forum to represent all the parents of children at a school. The Parent Council works with the Head Teacher to support learning and teaching, school improvement and parental and community engagement. They are allocated a small amount of funding by local authorities to support work with the wider Parent Forum. In Aberdeenshire Parent Councils are insured for their activities through an organisation called CONNECT.

#### What's the difference between the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Parent Council?

The PTA is largely a group of parents who fundraise for the school. Parent Councils are covered by the Parental Involvement Act 2006 and are the recognised way for schools and local authorities to consult with parents. It is the responsibility of local authorities to provide support for Parent Councils.

#### What is the Parent Forum/Parent Body?

The Parent Forum or Parent Body is the name given to all parents (including guardians and carers) of all children attending the school. It is the role of the Parent Council to gather and represent the views of all parents. The Parent Council is therefore accountable to the Parent Forum.

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### What is the role of a Parent Council?

The Parent Council has a variety of roles. It can:

- provide a voice for parents, in schools and in their local authority,
- on issues that are important to them and their children
- help the school to understand how to involve parents most effectively in their children's learning and in the life of the school
- support the school and Head Teacher in developing strong home/school partnerships
- support the school in understanding and making links with the wider community
- capture the unique and varied skills, interests, knowledge and experience that parents can offer, to help the school improve and develop

### What does this look like in practice? Parent Councils can:

- **Consult and Collaborate**  
Consult with all parents about matters which affect the life of the school and contribute to discussions about these. Aspects on which a Parent Council may consult and collaborate might include:
  - Learning and teaching
  - The school improvement plan
  - Issues related to school budgets and school funding
  - Recruitment to the school's Senior Leadership Team
  - School Inspection
  - Issues related to pupil safety like parking and transport
  - Issues related to building improvements
  - School Policies
- **Campaign**  
Campaign, on behalf of the school about matters directly affecting children. This might include campaigning about
  - Parking and traffic issues
  - Budgets
  - School transport
  - School Closures
- **Fundraise**  
Fundraise to help the school add value to what it offers to children. This is often the function of a Parent Teacher Association. The PTA can function independently or be a sub-group of the Parent Council



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### What is a Parent Council Constitution?

The constitution is the set of guidelines the Parent Council will adhere to. It should be shared with the Parent Forum and be regularly reviewed, ideally every 3-4 years.

Aberdeenshire Council has produced a draft constitution (to act as a guide) for Parent Councils. It can be found on the Aberdeenshire website at

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/parents-carers/parent-forums-and-councils/>

### Which issues should I take to my school and which to my Parent Council?

You should ask the school to deal with matters related to your own child's experience at school; you should ask the Parent Council to deal with more general concerns which may affect many/all children in the school.

No concerns about individual pupils, families or teachers should be discussed at Parent Council meetings. These concerns should always be referred to the Head Teacher. Some examples are listed below

Matters the school will deal with	Matters the Parent Council will deal with
Concerns re your own child's learning	Supporting learning at home, engagement in School Improvement Planning
A bullying incident which has affected your child	Consultation about school anti-bullying policy or other policy development
An issue about a particular teacher	recruitment for Senior Leadership, involvement in school inspections
Concerns about another child	Consultation on supporting inclusion
Your child's transition from Nursery to P1, Primary to Secondary, or Secondary to leaving school	Support in transition events
Children cycling in the playground	Campaigning to support road safety

### Where to get more information

Aberdeenshire's website has a section with information about Parent Councils.

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/parents-carers/parent-forums-and-councils/>

CONNECT is an organisation set up to support Parents with all aspects of Parental Engagement. They insure all Parent Councils in Aberdeenshire. Their website contains lots of useful information about Parent Councils : <https://www.connect.scot/>

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